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Subject: Fw: ADN: EPA to review Bristol Bay projects, including Pebble mine
([embedded image](#))

Breaking news.

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<http://www.adn.com/2011/02/07/1688653/epa-to-review-bristol-bay-projects.html#>

EPA to review proposed Bristol Bay projects, including Pebble mine

By ELIZABETH BLUEMINK
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(02/07/11 10:05:40)

The federal Environmental Protection Agency said today that it will review the suitability of large-scale development projects -- such as the proposed copper and gold Pebble mine -- in the Bristol Bay watershed.

The EPA said it is launching the review in response to petitions last year from tribes and other organizations opposed to Pebble. Those groups are worried about the potential impact of large-scale mining on Bristol Bay's world-class salmon runs.

"The Bristol Bay watershed is essential to the health, environment and economy of Alaska," said EPA Regional Administrator Dennis McLerran in a written statement.

"Gathering data and getting public review now, before development occurs, just makes sense. Doing this we can be assured that our future decisions are grounded in the best science and information and in touch with the needs of these communities," McLerran said.

Though it rarely uses this authority, EPA can block waste discharges in areas it determines that development will result in too much harm to aquatic life, recreational areas and drinking water.

U.S. Rep. Don Young has filed legislation to remove EPA's ability to block projects on that basis. Also, Gov. Sean Parnell last year sent a letter to the EPA opposing the Bristol Bay watershed review. Nine Bristol Bay tribes asked EPA to consider adding protections for the Bristol Bay Watershed under federal water pollution laws. Two other tribes asked the agency to delay any action on the matter until the

companies seeking to develop Pebble apply for permits. The companies are not expected to submit permit applications until next year.

EPA said its review will focus on the Nushagak and Kvichak watersheds, both downstream of the Pebble deposit.

This is a developing story. Check back for updates.

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